

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 12-18, 20-22 and 24-26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22 and 24-26 are amended. Claims 3, 11, 19 and 27 are canceled, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter found therein. No new matter has been added.

The Office Action rejects claim 27 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite. The rejection is rendered moot by the cancellation of claim 27.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 9 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Staiger (PCT Publication WO 98/39861, which is equivalent to U.S. Patent No. 6,628,441) in view of Tanenbaum ("Computer Networks" by A. Tanenbaum, Prentice-Hall 1981, pp. 103-04) or Friend ("Understanding Data Communication" by G. Friend et al., Texas Instruments Inc., 1984, pp. 4-8 through 4-13). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

None of the applied references discloses or suggests a sheet-shaped optical bus comprising a light guide passage; reflection portions that optically reflect respective signals, which are incident thereon and are input from the plurality of respective radio signal reception sections, toward respective predetermined directions; and a diffusion reflection plate that reflects the signals reflected by the reflection portions while diffusing the reflected signals, wherein the diffusion reflection plate is disposed on one end of the light guide passage to face the reflection portions, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 9 and 17.

Staiger, Tanenbaum and Friend all fail to disclose or suggest the detailed structure of the sheet-shaped optical bus recited in claims 1, 9 and 17. Staiger only discloses a transmission system with a plurality of units comprising an optical signal transmission section for connecting the units, where an optical bus 7 can be the optical transmission section (Figs 1 and 5). However, does not Staiger disclose or suggest the detailed structure of the sheet-

shaped optical bus recited in claims 1, 9 and 17. Tanenbaum and Friend only teach multiplexing techniques to share an optical bus among several users and the advantages thereof. Tanenbaum and Friend also fail to disclose or suggest the detailed structure of the sheet-shaped optical bus recited in claims 1, 9 and 17.

Furthermore, neither Matsuda (U.S. Patent No. 5,477,363), Paniccia (U.S. Patent No. 6,374,020), nor Feldman (U.S. Patent No. 6,332,050), individually or in combination, compensates for the above-noted deficiencies of Staiger, Tanenbaum and Friend.

Therefore, independent claims 1, 9 and 17 define patentable subject matter. Claims 2, 4-8, 10, 12-16, 18, 20-22 and 24-26 depend from the respective independent claims, and therefore also define patentable subject matter, as well as for the other features they recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 2, 4-10, 12-18, 20-22 and 24-26 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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